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THE COLOR BLUE ♪ ♪
IN POTTERY AND POR-
CELAIN ♪ ♪ BY MARY
CHURCHILL RIPLEY ♪



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THE COLOR BLUE ♀ ♀
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*This edition of "The Color Blue" is limited to 350 copies
and is a reprint from articles which have appeared in
"Old China."*

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VASSEL CLUB
ART TO
NOTES TO

The Color Blue in Pottery and Porcelain

“TIP it wi' blue, and then it 'll do”—sang merrily the old English potters, when after having learned their art from the Dutch, they gave to England a “blue and white” as essentially their own as were the more ambitious and better quality wares of China and Japan, productions of the Orient.

Though the oldest “blue and white” to be found in England was doubtless brought to the East India Company from China, and handed down from its original owners to their American as well as English descendants, still old Staffordshire ware is most frequently referred to by inheritors of that old historical blue so loved by American housewives.



India China or Chinese Canton Ware.

The porcelain called “India China” was not made in India as its name would indicate, but in China and in various places in that far away land where famous potteries were located. It was called “India China” because originally carried by the East India Company to England and Holland. Most commonly these wares were decorated in Canton and Nankin.

In the Staffordshire potteries in the latter part of the Eighteenth and early in the Nineteenth centuries, were made the famous historical plates so often and well described.

Early English ware was made of coarse clay, covered with material of a finer body, upon which designs were either printed or painted. The change from this ware to stoneware and from stoneware to porcelain has been gradual, but the old Staffordshire blue and white was a coarse body ware. Potters everywhere in Great Britain were striving to produce better quality in their "table china," and while porcelain was being made in the potteries at Worcester, Chelsea, Derby, Plymouth, Bristol and numerous other places, many of the most skilled workers of the times contented themselves with indefatigable efforts to perfect the "cream color ware" which was invented by Astbury, and brought to perfection by Wedgwood and Spode. During the lifetime of Josiah Wedgwood no porcelain



Staffordshire Ware.

was made in the potteries bearing his name, but, as the Queen favored and honored the great potter, he called his "cream color" Queen's ware. As potters made their glazes and pastes of varying shades, the student collector may become acquainted with numberless methods of detecting differences in articles they examine. Old Spode "cream color" is unlike any other, and the blue painted and printed upon it has a different look from that which decorated Leeds and wares of other potteries.

Famous patterns, that have from the beginning of the rage for blue and white, vied with each other for popular favor, are called by names that have been given them sometimes by the admiring public, but oftener by the designers of the patterns produced by them, for the use of their potter patrons. Chief among these is the "Willow pattern," designed by Thomas Minton for the use of Turner, who at that time owned potteries in Caughley. The story of the pattern has been oft and quaintly told, but whether always correctly rendered is a matter for discussion. It will be wise for collectors to compare their views on the subject of the origin of many of the English designs.



Delft Ware.

Delft was made in Holland. It was of coarse, friable, sonorous pottery, which when slightly baked was covered with a thick opaque enamel, which gave the ware the appearance of porcelain. In this enamel we note a different material altogether from that which was used by the English potters, called "Astbury Dip" when used to cover coarse clay bodies, and "cream color ware" when articles were made entirely of the finely prepared clay. The use of tin made the stanniferous enamel used in Holland absolutely opaque, and the firing converted it into a substance which appeared when viewed casually, to be very like the porcelain imported from the far East.

Decorations in blue upon the Holland Delft are as attractive as they are numerous. One may almost invariably trace Oriental inspiration when analyzing these designs. Baskets and fruits, flowers and animals, suggest life in the Orient, and have been copied from Chinese and Japanese drawings on plates, platters and jars.

Among popular designs the onion pattern, in blue upon white porcelain, was copied by the Meissen (Royal Dresden) factory, from porcelain carried from China to Germany. In the Museum in Dresden is the original dish from which the

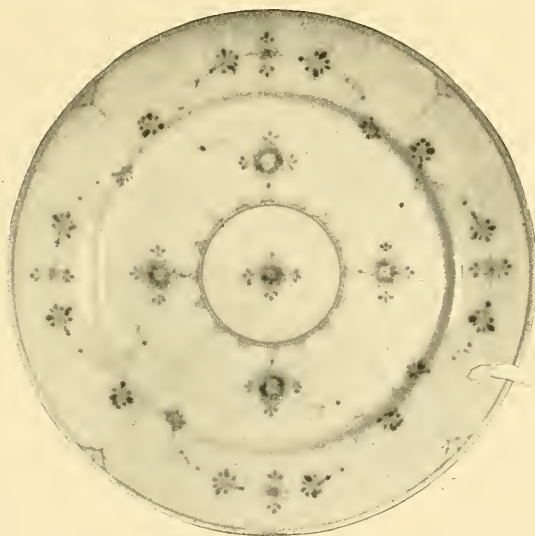


Dresden Blue and White Plate (Onion Pattern.)

design was borrowed. When painted in the royal factory, the porcelain is marked with the crossed swords in the decoration as well as on the back of the pieces where the regular factory mark is placed. Ordinarily, on plates, the crossed swords appear in the main stem of the design. It is claimed in the factory at Meissen, that occasionally a director of work in the pottery will omit the crossed swords in the decoration, during the entire period of his rule, as it is not obligatory that they shall appear upon the surfaces of wares if properly placed underneath. However this disputed point may be settled by those who care for such details, it remains a fact that the crossed swords in the decoration are generally to be found.

Discussions innumerable have arisen in regard to the Meissen mark, and nothing so well settles debate, as direct information from the authorities at the royal factory: "All porcelain articles made in the royal factory at Meissen, are marked *under the glaze*, with the crossed swords which have been used since the days of the Elector of Saxony. If articles are sold in undecorated condition, a cut is invariably made in the glaze across the mark. When such cut is found, the article has been decorated outside the royal factory, by quite as skillful an artist perhaps as any employed there, but one outside the factory. When decorated specimens have marks or scratches either above or below the crossed swords, they may be known as imperfect pieces and are thus marked."

There are many other factories in Meissen beside the royal factory. Formed articles are there made and sold to numberless artists who decorate the porcelain they have bought unpainted, and sell it with their own private marks upon it. The word "Meissen" written inside an oval, is used for the factory mark in one of the largest potteries in the town.



Copenhagen Blue and White Plate.

Still another interesting pattern in blue and white, may be found upon Danish porcelain, not perhaps seen as often in American collections as its beauty would warrant. The con-

ventional design used at the royal factory in Copenhagen is semi-geometrical, and outlines on white a delicate tracery of curves and lines, with an occasional set flower figure in blue. The factory mark consists of three wavy lines in blue under the glaze. One very  attractive and popular design for the face of a plate consists of the royal crown in blue on a pure white ground, and underneath the crown is the factory mark used as decoration and ornamental design, the wavy lines made very thick and of varying shades of blue.

Chinese Porcelain

THUS far, reference only has been made to Oriental porcelains, but in very truth they reign supreme in the realm of the potter's art. No such blue and white has ever been made elsewhere, and European porcelains owe their birth and development to the efforts of individual potters to copy wares brought from the Orient.

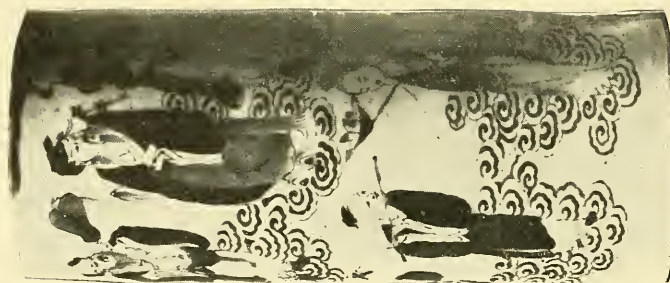
Over nine hundred years ago, an old Emperor, "Tchitsong" by name, is said to have ordered that the porcelain made for the use of the palace be of the color blue seen in the sky through a rift in the clouds after rain. Since then the various ideas of many different minds have been brought to bear upon the subject, and "heaven's own blue" has appeared



A rare old bowl decorated with the Eight Immortals. Archaic scroll work on stand and flame motives under the blue lines at the top of the bowl.

through the years in every shade from light delicate forget-me-not tint, to the dull greenish blue ordinarily called "robin's egg blue."

It is no simple task to write briefly and yet comprehensively upon so vast a subject. There are those who, having made a study of oriental porcelain for a lifetime, say unreservedly, "there is still enough beyond to acquire, for another fifty years' work."



Famous old design on white porcelain cylindrical vase. The Immortals by name, are "Le Te-Kwae," who carries a crutch, "Ho Suen-Koo," with a lotus flower, "Lei Tung-Pin," with a sword, "Chang Ko-Lau," whose emblem is a musical instrument made of bamboo, "Tsaot Kuo-Kin," with castanets, and "Lau Tsao-Ho," bearing a basket of flowers, "Han Chung-Le," carrying a fan, "Han Seang-Tsue," with a flute.

The color Blue, what is it? Why do shades vary? Is exact information obtainable regarding it? To answer the last question first, it is safe to assert that much exact information does exist relating to periods and processes in the Ceramic art of China, and with the growing desire for reliable guidance it is most fortunate that there are those arising well fitted to direct research. Such are coming out to us from the cloistered seclusion of museum study, as well as from personal contact with foreign people and things, and the consensus of carefully formulated opinions is giving us a standard more nearly right than any heretofore reached.

As we must necessarily exclude more information than we can possibly include in so short a treatise, let us confine ourselves to a single period in the history of Chinese blue and white porcelain, and ascertain some one thing regarding it. The student collector has perchance learned that whenever he has particularly admired the color blue in white porcelain, either when attending sales, or by glancing into shop windows, someone, the dealer or a friend has knowingly said—"yes, of course you admire that, it is a Kang-he piece."

The Chinese name means nothing at first, but after a while, when the lover of things beautiful for the first time dares to say, "I believe that this is a Kang-he piece"—and consulting his catalogue he finds that he is right, a definite something has happened.

Now to proceed with the briefest investigation, at least one may learn to know whether "Kang-he" refers to person, period, or product. The name is that of an emperor, the second of the present dynasty. "Kang-he" reigned for sixty years, was a liberal patron of art, and one who learned much through the Jesuit missionaries, of peoples, manners and customs beyond the limits of the Chinese Empire. There have been in China periods in which good pigments either native or foreign have been hard to obtain. In the 15th and 16th centuries cobalt was carried into China by either the Jesuits or the Mohammedans, and was then extensively used. Authorities differ in regard to the length of time the supply continued, wares made during its use are designated as "Moslem blue." The exact nature of the pigment used by the founder of the porcelain manufactory in the 10th century,

"Chi-tsung," who ordered that the porcelain for the palace use be made of "the color blue seen through a rift in the clouds after rain," is not known, but that ware, together with very early Ming specimens, is called by collectors "Ante-Moslem blue."

The "Kang-he" blue has served as standard for many years. Other blues are more or less like "Kang-he"—either lighter or darker,—of more violet shade or of redder tone.



Blue and white plate of fine porcelain. Blue line on edge. Conventional decoration on the rim is marked off by two blue lines inside. In the center the Eight Immortals appear upon mythical beasts, each carrying appropriate emblems. This plate is a crude replica of a famous old one.

The presence of certain ores, manganese, iron etc., alters the shade of blue used in decoration, and experts become so familiar with these slight differences that it becomes second nature to separate pure cobalt blues from all others. There is often a greenish hue to the glaze of white porcelain, through which the blue, in decoration under the glaze, owes a peculiar softness that some collectors admire, while others strive to secure pieces of cream white porcelain, with what is generally known as ivory white glaze. Attention to the subtle differences in shades and texture will train the eye, and will give the experience which will prepare the way for further study of detail in decoration.

And here is the chief charm about things Oriental, the objects mean so much. Each was originally made for a purpose, to supply a need. We have decorations in blue upon white porcelains illustrative of *religious*, *mythological*, and *historical* subjects, and we note that use is made over and over again of the same general designs, adapted to the needs of various objects. Back of the form, the meaning may always be found.



Specimen of blue and white Hawthorn, called "Ascending Stem Hawthorn." In Hawthorn decoration the flower is left uncolored, and the background is filled in with mottled blue, which is crossed or hatched with a dark color, to represent cracks in thin ice, upon which the white blossoms have fallen. There are three varieties of Hawthorn pattern, the "ascending stem," the "descending stem," and the "blob" or "stemless."

More or less diligently, as he chooses, the student collector may enter upon the pursuit of knowledge which will assist in the study of objects. When fully equipped with data, he will at once, when handling a specimen, look to see the nature of the paste, the method of applying color, whether under or over the glaze, and the tint of the glaze itself. Then, proceeding to analyze the pattern, he will note that the same figures, animals, flowers, frets, etc., appear again and again,

and after a while he recognizes the emblems of Buddhism, and the eight immortals of Taoist fame, the precious objects used by scholars, and different things symbolic of rank and position, whether military or official. Upon blue and white porcelains we find there are better illustrations of the thought life of China, than appear in the polychrome decoration, and this is the chief reason for advocating the study of blue and white, before attempting even to enumerate the varying shades of mazarin, sapphire, peacock, and robin's egg blue.



Kang-he vase in the South Kensington Museum, decorated with the Taoist Immortals standing upon the clouds.



Landscape design on Kang-he blue and white porcelain vase. Neck decorated with fret and dots.

We find it possible, in "blue and white," because of interpretive patterns, to classify with accuracy, and to distinguish between forms; those made for temple use being somewhat different from articles used for food, and objects for ornament showing still greater variety.

There are definite styles in Chinese ornament, and the simplest division groups under "Archaic," "Naturalistic" and "Conventional"—designs which are more truly absolute than the historic ornament of any other country.

Japanese Porcelain

IN attempting to study the art of the Japanese potter, we find ourselves at the outset, face to face with a grave difficulty. Commercial wares exist to such an unlimited extent, that it is next to impossible to secure specimens of what collectors call "pure Japanese wares." Articles small and large are made and have been made for many years in the "land of the rising sun," for foreign markets. European shapes and styles have also been copied, and even patterns which mean nothing whatever to the native Japanese, have been used upon pottery and porcelain. For such commercial wares, collectors care little or nothing, preferring to secure specimens of national interest and importance. With this latter class of objects we shall attempt to deal, though for illustration we may be obliged to use reproductions, as it is not easy to do otherwise when endeavoring to speak of the subject at large.

It is far easier to separate the commercial from the National art of Japan in the study of wares, though that is no simple task, than to learn to distinguish between decorations purely Japanese, and those showing Chinese or Corean influences. Potters were sent by princes to China to learn methods of the more advanced artists there, and it was a matter of pride to successfully imitate foreign things.

It is impossible to comprehend much about the art of a country, without some knowledge of its history, manners and customs. The ceremonial pottery of Japan has about it a charm that enhances its value, and gives adequate satisfaction to the collector who seeks to trace the history and thought of the people.

The arts were developed in Japan under the patronage of princes, who with desire to outdo their neighbors employed artists and artisans to make for them the best articles they could for their private use, and as gifts to friends. Ceremonies of centuries standing called for bowls and jars of traditional shapes and styles. The religions of the country required vessels, ornaments and images, the demand for which

constantly stimulated the inventive genius of native potters. These objects bore often the most suggestive and artistic decoration.

It has been said that the true secret of the charm that is so subtly evident in things Japanese, consists in the fact that Japanese artists remember beauty, and paint their memories. One has only to watch an artist at work to note how true this is. From childhood the thing beautiful has impressed itself upon him, and the toss of the wave, the flight of the birds, the swaying of the grasses, the half concealed moon, the cloud-penetrating mountain peak,—vie with each other for consideration.



Plate showing copy of Chinese mark on reverse. Dish of "Arita" porcelain with Nabeshima "Kushite" pattern on base. Reverse of "Owari" plate, decorated with "wave pattern" and tide jewels.

So highly imaginative were the early potters of Japan, that the shapes they formed were suggestive of keen artistic sense. When conventionally treated Japanese ornament overpowers us by its intricacy and minute perfection. Built upon circles and geometrical forms, are numberless frets and designs; and ornament suggested by animal, floral and bird forms, gives free play to the fanciful genius of artists. At first patterns seem numberless, but gradually a few are found to be more commonly used than others, and many of them are based upon the historic ornament of China.

It is difficult to properly classify the pottery and porcelain

of Japan, as potters have used clays in their native state, without bringing them to known consistencies. This has led to a vast number of experimental products, and the charm of much that has been made, consists in the fact that nothing exactly like it exists. The fact that potteries are largely family affairs, leads to development of individual styles. Traditions are handed down not only from father to son, but it has long been the custom in Japan to give one's name to a favorite apprentice to the exclusion of the son's rights. A curious story of a famous bowl illustrates this point. While traveling in Japan a dozen years ago, a collector discovered in an out of the way hamlet a very skilful potter. Believing that he would some day be very great, the collector bought from him a costly bowl, which bore the potter's own mark. The decoration showed a most unique quality, and the curio was much admired in Europe. Five years later, on a second visit to Japan, the collector went again to the little village, and found that the same potter was at work, but not marking his wares which were very beautiful, but of an entirely different style from any known before. Upon being told by the potter that he had sold everything to an apprentice, his name and all, and that he had no longer a right to use his own name upon his wares, the traveler bought a second bowl, decorated with new design, and departed with his treasure. He then went to the apprentice, and bought an exact copy of the original bowl, with an exact copy of the mark, first used by the old potter and sold to the apprentice. On a third visit to Japan the collector found both master potter and apprentice dead, and from the son of the old potter he secured three bowls, one an exact copy of the original bowl, the second of the bowl made by the apprentice, the third showing a slight change, in the style adopted by the son. All three of those bowls were marked on the bottom with the mark originally used by the father potter, the son having bought it back from the family of the apprentice, after his death. Having no skill himself, the son had failed to make as perfect ware as that made by his father, though at first glance the replicas seemed exactly like the original.

This anecdote will convey some little idea of the advisability of careful procedure in analyzing and placing wares, and



Japanese Kakemono—The Seven Household Gods.

the claims of broad classification are urged upon students of the potter's art.

In making a collection of pottery of any country it is wise to secure as far as possible specimens made for native use. The most important ceremonies of Japan that call for special objects, have given us incense burners, tea jars, tea bowls, incense boxes, braziers, vases for holding various objects, brushes, pencils, etc., Saké cups and bottles, cups and cup stands, flower vases for the "flower arrangement," images for altar use, images of household gods, and many things illustrative of the history and mythology of the Japanese.

In decoration, symbols and emblems are used extensively, the motif almost invariably is based on ancient themes. Signs of longevity and good luck figure largely on all pottery and porcelain.

Personages most commonly portrayed are the seven household gods, who though somewhat different in characteristics and attributes, suggest the eight immortals of China. In fact, they are often mistaken by collectors, the one group for the other. Although the Japanese often copy the legendary beings of China upon their wares, we less often see upon Chinese porcelain anything suggestive of Japanese mythology. The trained eye sees differences in so called "grotesque" ornamentation.

Chinese and Japanese porcelains are often mistaken for each other, and careful analysis is necessary in order to properly place wares. Collectors establish ways of their own to determine the quality of paste, and it is surprising to note the progress made by careful students determined to learn.

Without further consideration of the general subject let us proceed to cull some definite information regarding the use of blue in the Ceramic art of Japan. Eliminating all preconceived opinions, we may build definitely a small amount of absolute knowledge upon the few facts gleaned from close study, securing specimens that will illustrate what we learn, and will help us on our way to more advanced investigation.

In Japan, as elsewhere, it was in remote times and places that styles were developed, those styles, when known, could very readily be copied in the near vicinity of cities, where both potters and clays could be brought by wealthy princes and pa-

trons of the art. It is always the case, that reproductions can be more successfully carried out near great centers where objects are brought from other places and known and talked about. So in London, in the early history of the potter's art in England, we find "the mystery of porcelain" talked about and attempts made to copy the wonderful new material, long before the Staffordshire potters were aware of its existence. It is of great assistance to us to grasp this thought in working out theories for ourselves.

It is often the case in Japan that wares carry various names, princes, potters, cities and individuals lending for adoption either their own names or words of recognition or commendation. For example, the word "RAKU," so often used, meaning "enjoyment," was given on a gold seal to a potter in the 16th century, who made satisfactory wares for the "tea ceremony," for a patron of the potter's art. This seal has been handed down through many generations, and has been used by different individuals in direct line, as well as by many who have copied it, and by its use merely expressed their desire to follow so illustrious a lead, and to produce perfect wares. To distinguish between these and other similar wares is no easy task, and many collectors frankly admit that they group the wares of Japan under *styles*, without regard to the names of individual potters.

The best known of Japanese wares decorated with blue, are those which were first made in the Province of "Hizen." Through the centuries of the development of the art, vast quantities of porcelain have been sent out of Japan from the various ports of this province, and the names of the ports are intimately connected with the wares themselves. Both "Nagasaki" and "Imari" are well known names used for "Hizen" porcelain brought from ports of the same names to Europe during the early years of British and Dutch trade with the Orient. Not only as "Nagasaki" and "Imari," but also as "Arita," "Korantia," "Hirado," and "Nabeshima" are the porcelains of "Hizen" classified. "Arita" is the name of the town where clays have been found and used for manufacture of porcelain for centuries; "Korantia" the name of a large manufactory of porcelain in the town of "Arita;" "Hirado" and "Nabeshima" the names given to wares pro-

duced for two Princes who were early patrons of the art. With these half dozen names one may begin analytical study of the blue and white porcelains of Japan, from the standpoint of the student, who is dependent even in Japan upon the research of others for facts relating to the beginnings of art there, and in our libraries and museums we may acquaint ourselves with all that is really known, comparing wares and substantiating conclusions by the study of specimens, if no better means are procurable.

History tells us that porcelain was first made in Japan by a man who went to China to study the art in the sixteenth



Plate to left of cut, of old "Hizen" ware. Middle plate of "Owari." Dish to right, modern "Arita" porcelain. Cup of "Imari" with bamboo and pine decoration. Cup to the right of Japanese crackle ware.

century. He settled in the Province of Hizen and decorated his wares with blue. Since that time a great many factories have arisen, so that commercial wares have proceeded from that province made after the style introduced from China. As the Dutch alone were allowed entrance to Japan through the two "silent centuries" so-called, while the port was closed to the outside world (from the middle of the 17th to the middle of the 19th centuries), and as their trading post was in the harbor of Nagasaki, on a small island, Decima by name, the "Hizen" wares made for export during that period bore varying names as has been stated, but the one word "Hizen" covers all the others, and in Europe we hear collectors speak of their "Old Hizen" oftener than we do here. Within the wide limits of so broad a classification, we find it necessary to

seek some main features for identification of wares. Two names, "Nabeshima" and "Hirado," have become synonymous with fine quality old "Hizen" or "Imari" ware. For two princes these wares were produced in the 18th century. Private sale was not allowed during the period of early manufacture of articles made exclusively for the princes, but in Arita at the present time are to be obtained reproductions of shapes and patterns once made for private use. The distinguishing mark on old "Nabeshima" was called "Kushité" and it decorates in blue design upon white porcelain the stands and bases of bowls and dishes, with a pattern resembling the teeth of a comb. A rival prince in the neighborhood of Hirado established kilns where the beautiful porcelains which bear the name of the place were made and decorated in blue with the famous design so well known to collectors as "Boys under



Stand for Sake Cup, deep dark blue decoration in fret designs. Small center dish of "Imari." Rough box with "Tomoye" design "Owari" porcelain.

Pine Tree." When the objects were perfect in every way they were decorated with seven (7) boys; when less perfect with five (5) boys, and with three (3) when even less satisfactory.

The breaking up of the old government in the middle of the last century did away with many of the old regime methods, and the beautiful pieces made by one prince for another, or as gift to Emperor or Shogun, were many of them sold, and since then have found their way into private collections. Many speak of both "Nabeshima" and "Hirado" wares as "Old Imari," but by common consent that name is generally supposed to be applied to the Blue, Red and Gold wares, known as "Old Japan" to English potters, when first porcelains were carried to Europe from Japan. Spode and many famous potters in England tried to copy "Old Imari,"

and succeeded too, most creditably, in making beautiful wares skilfully decorated, though utterly unlike oriental objects that had served as inspiration. The color blue varies on "Nabeshima" ware, though it generally shows an attempt to copy the best cobalt decorations of China. Before it was known that the right clays existed in Japan, materials were brought from China for the manufacture of porcelain by the potters who met there to learn their art, and on very early porcelains the effect of blue over coarse paste and glaze, is different from the same blue used later, on finer grade ware.

Two names "Seto" and "Sometsuke" are often used by the Japanese, to designate porcelain (Seto) and the blue and white wares (Sometsuke.) In the province of Owari, Sometsuke is made now, and has been for many years. Ever since the potters of "Arita" first sent to China for light on the subject, the art of the potter has been taught to men who have gone to the Province of "Hizen" to study. "Such, having learned their art long ago, settled in the province of Owari, at Seto and other towns, and vast quantities of wares are turned out annually from these places to supply both native and foreign needs. In speaking of blue, decoration, reference is made to porcelain decorated with underglaze blue, exclusively.

Pottery has been made in Japan for centuries, but no porcelain claims our attention, as such, much before the latter part of the 16th century. Blue had been used for splash glaze decoration, and for lines and frets upon rough pottery, but the "blue and white" objects such as affect our present study were of later date.

The porcelains of Japan were, and are, so different from those of China that the eye becomes soon trained when one sets about the task of analyzing them.

For such work, the amateur should equip himself with bits of white paper of varying shades. When about to study an object match a bit of paper to the color of the jar or vase. Notice if of a cream or blue white,—if of fine or coarse texture, and any other features of interest. When a bit of paper is found that really suggests the color of the porcelain, label and keep it, and compare other things with it. This will materially help one to note differences in color. When examining

the paste in a fracture, notice if the body of the ware is close grained or not. If the glaze seems closely united with the body, or is like a glass on either side of it. Notice too, if between the two glazed surfaces, the body of the ware is of exactly the same shade as the face of the glazed ware. Note too whether the glaze chips evenly or unevenly from the body, and particularly whether it carries away a bit of the body with the glaze in chipped places.

These observations will carry the thought along, and lead on to further discoveries. Perchance we note that the glaze is evidently much colored, or tinted, as it is almost always in old "Canton" and "Nankin" ware. Match paper to the color of the paste as well as to the glazed surface, and keep for reference. It is amazing to see how fast a student can progress in analysis of wares, by thus drilling himself in details, and that which he learns in this way is his own private property and makes him an independent expert in the course of time.

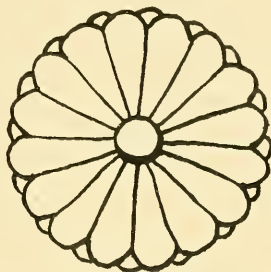
Although it is true that there are great differences between Chinese and Japanese porcelain, it is equally a fact that there are strong points of likeness between certain wares. Judgment based on experience, can alone detect the difference between delicate thin "Old Hizen" decorated with the "parsley," "barley corn" or "aster" pattern, and the Nankin ware of equal fineness. One who is qualified to speak with absolute authority, will sometimes hesitate before determining which is which. Questions that interest experts regarding the comparative merits of the wares of the two countries are of no use to beginners who are struggling to know a few things accurately, and who desire to be started in the right direction, so we shall do no more than lead to a fuller confidence those who are venturing to hold individual opinion.

The color blue varies on Japanese porcelain, from the deepest sapphire to the softest grey blue tint. The color blue never seems quite as absolutely a part of the body of the ware as when used on Chinese biscuit. Some Japanese wares are baked slightly before any decoration is applied, and it is held by many authorities, that for this reason the blue is never quite as soft as Chinese blue. The student collector must learn to judge of this for himself, and also to notice the vary-

ing shades of blue exactly as he does of white, using blue papers for comparison and guidance.

Among the most famous designs used on Japanese blue and white is that which is painted upon ware made for Imperial use. The porcelain selected for the palace is always as perfectly made as it is possible to make it, a slight flaw rendering an object unworthy.

All ware made for the palace is marked with the Imperial crest, the sixteen petal chrysanthemum. Grave mistakes are made by collectors who know only this fact, that there are sixteen petals in the crest of Japan. Many unscrupulous



Kiku-mon—Imperial Badge of Japan.

Japanese dealers mislead the unwary by urging upon them articles that seem to bear the correct flower in decoration but unless made especially for Imperial use, it is never legitimately used in the Empire. Whenever the sixteen petalled chrysanthemum is found upon objects for other than Imperial use there is some slight difference observable between it and the royal ornament. Either there is more or less shading, the center of the blossom is different, the tips of the petals are squared, or some slight change is made that is sufficient to quiet the conscience of the potter who made the object, but not to fail to mislead the curio hunter in search of a specimen.



"Kushité" (comb-tooth) pattern.

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